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PROGRAM Meet the Press STATION WRC-TV NBC Network

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P SUBJECT George Shultz Interviewed

J MARVIN KALB: On strategic weapons, a major policy shift by the United States. President Reagan scraps the constraints of the unratified SALT II treaty on the even of the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting that produces still one more rift in the Atlantic alliance; and questions about the precarious state of U.S.-Soviet relations, with the dwindling chance for another summit at the top of the list. Questions for our guest today, the Secretary of State, George Shultz, who has just returned from that contentious NATO meeting in Canada to confront, as well, the dangerous problems of Central America and the Middle East.

Meet the Press, Sunday, June 1st, 1986.

Hello, and welcome once again. I am Marvin Kalb.

It is just a little over six months since President Reagan met with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Geneva. They agreed to meet again this year in the United States and next year in the Soviet Union. Expectations for an overall improvement in relations were high. Now they are again seen as low.

What has happened that explains this change? We'll try to get some of the answers during the course of this program.

J And joining me for our interview with the Secretary of State today, John Wallach, the Foreign Editor of the Hearst newspapers; and Strobe Talbott, the Washington bureau chief for Time magazine.

Mr. Secretary, let's begin. The expectations were high. We were at Geneva with you. They're now low. What accounts for the change?

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SECRETARY OF STATE GEORGE SHULTZ: Well, I don't know what accounts for the change. From our standpoint, our approach has been quite consistent and steady. We feel that it's very important to have this meeting. We think that important things can be done there that will be beneficial to us and the Soviet Union. And we're prepared to do the hard work necessary to make it a worthwhile meeting. That's been our approach all along and that's where we are right now.

KALB: By implication, are you suggesting that possibly Soviet leader Gorbachev might not be as interested in the meeting this year as he was?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I have no capacity to speak for him or speculate. I don't care to speculate about it. All I can say is that President Reagan is ready to have the meeting and ready to have the really great preparatory work that must be done to make such a meeting a success go forward.

STROBE TALBOTT: Mr. Secretary, coming to this question of the impending scrapping of the SALT II accords that dominated much of the next this week and dominated many of your discussions in Halifax. You've made a couple of statements during the week to the effect that the SALT II treaty is obsolete, and you've strongly implied that there's no relative military advantage for the United States to have the Soviets constrained in their strategic forces by the SALT II treaty.

The Soviets have now threatened that if we break out of the numerical limits of the SALT II treaty at the end of the year, they will do likewise. Is this a hollow threat? Is there really no additional military threat to the United States if the Soviets break out of SALT II?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: The Soviets have broken out of SALT II. That's the point. And for some time.

TALBOTT: The numerical ceilings in SALT II.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: They have deployed a second system, which is prohibited by the teaty. And they heavily encrypt their telemetry, which impairs verification under the treaty.

So, to imply, as your question does, that, somehow or other, they are in comformance with it and we may not be is not correct. You have to take a treaty in all of its dimensions and not allow either side to decide selectively what it wants to conform to and what it doesn't.

Now, I want to change the phraseology that you've all used. The President's statement was a very thoughtful statement

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and it talked essentially about shifting gears in what represents appropriate restraint on the part of the United States. What we have to remember is that we're responsible for the deterrence that keeps the peace, and so we have to look at Soviet behavior, at our own budget constraints and other constraints, and basically see what is necessary to maintain that deterrent posture. And that's what the President was doing.

JOHN WALLACH: Mr. Secretary, you spoke of the introduction of a second new type of ICBM. The practical consequences of scrapping SALT II would mean, according to your own Pentagon, the Joint Chiefs' report, the Soviet military power report, that the 70-plus SS-11 silos that the Soviets have destroyed to make room for the new SS-25, that they would be able to go ahead with those, they wouldn't have to scrapt them, that as many as 9000 new warheads, new Soviet nuclear warheads might be added to their arsenal without the restraint the SALT II.

Doesn't that concern you?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: One of the problems with SALT II, and a reason why I think it is increasingly obsolete -- and here I'm only repeating what was said, for example, in the Scowcroft Commission report -- the problem with SALT II is that it's a treaty about limiting increases. And the warhead ceiling is something that the Soviets can add warheads to their arsenal by a considerable amount, basically double the amount that was there at the beginning, and still be in conformity with it.

So, that's a problem about the treaty. And it only emphasizes the point the President has consistently made -- namely, that what we need to do is get a radical reduction in the levels of these strategic forces.

KALB: Mr. Secretary, there are obviously more questions.

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KALB: Mr. Secretary, I'm not quite sure I understand what you were saying a moment ago when you took objection to the way we phrased the President's decision on SALT II. He has scrapped the constraints of SALT II, has he not?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, I thought you might be asking me about this subject and I brought along the language the President used. Perhaps I could read it to you.

KALB: Please...

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I don't want to paraphrase it. I

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think it's important to say what the President said, and I brought myself a prop.

KALB: Okay, let's hear it.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: This is the President. Quote: "I continue to hope that the Soviet Union will use this time" -- that is, the time between now and around the end of the year -- "to take the constructive steps necessary to alter the current situation. Should they do so, we will certainly take this into account. I do not anticipate any appreciable numerical growth in U.S. strategic offensive forces, assuming no significant change in the threat we face as we implement the strategic modernization program. The United States will not deploy more strategic nuclear delivery vehicles than does the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the United States will not deploy more strategic ballistic missile warheads than does the Soviet Union. In sum, we will continue to exercise the utmost restraint, while protecting strategic deterrence, in order to help foster the necessary atmosphere for significant reductions in the strategic arsenals of both sides. This is the urgent task which faces us.

"I call on the Soviet Union to seize the opportunity to join us now in establishing an interim framework of truly mutual restraint." And then he goes on to call for the radical reductions that we all seek.

KALB: Okay. Mr. Secretary...

SECRETARY SHULTZ: So that is essentially saying there has been a regime of restraint based on a treaty that's been violated, that has run out of its terms and has an increasingly obsolete concept in it -- namely, that launchers should be the unit of account. And he is moving to a different kind of restraint based on looking at what they can do to us and what we can do to them.

KALB: Okay.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Deterrence.

KALB: Now, you've twice used the term "increasingly obsolete." I have heard from Secretary Weinberger and other senior officials in this Administration that it's obsolete, it's over, it's dead, it's finished. It's a thing of the past, according to Mr. Adelman.

Now, are they all wrong?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I am describing why the President decided what he decided: that more and more, as we see a system

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based on launchers rather than warheads, what we encourage is the putting on these launchers more and more warheads. And it's essentially destabilizing. And the Scowcroft Commission report made that point, I thought, very powerfully and correctly.

That's what I mean by the word obsolete.

TALBOTT: But no question that I asked earlier, or either or my colleagues asked earlier, implied that there are not dubious activities that the Soviets have been involved in under the name of arms control.

The fact of the matter is, though, no statement that the Administration has made implies that the Soviets have yet exceeded the numerical limits of SALT II. Those numerical limits prevent the Soviets from having more than 820 MIRVed ICBMs. They prevent the Soviet Union from putting more than 10 warheads on their largest and most threatening rocket, the SS-18.

The statement that you just read by the President suggests that at the end of the year we will, for the first time, go over the numerical limits of SALT -- namely, the 1320 ceiling. And the Soviets are saying that if we do that, they will go over the numerical limits on their side.

And my question to you originally, and I'd like to come back to it again, is: Will the United States be faced with a larger threat from the Soviet Union if they follow through on that promise?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: You have to balance things here. And let me just come back to the point that you can't have a treaty that has a number of provisions in it and have one party to the treaty decide, "Well, I'll violate this and I'll violate that, but I'll keep this. And by keeping this, I insist that the other side keep everything about the treaty." That's not an equitable way to go about it.

I think that the emergence of the new mobile second system, not in violation of the treaty, is a militarily very significant violation. And we have to worry about it.

TALBOTT: The system that's a counterpart to Midgetman.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, Midgetman is an idea, and it is not even settled down as a concept yet within the military circles that are working on it. The second system of the Soviet Union is a deployed system. I think they have around 70 deployed now.

TALBOTT: What would the Soviet Union have to do for the

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President to rescind his order, in effect, and not to go above the 1320 ceiling at the end of the year?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I don't think there's any particular thing that should be pointed to. But, of course, what we would all like to see, I think -- I know the President would. I would. And I think, in general, people all over the world would -- is an agreement that would genuinely bring down drastically these huge arsenals of strategic nuclear weapons. They are a menace.

WALLACH: Mr. Secretary, for the course of this Administration, we pursued the interim restraint policy, the policy that we would not undercut SALT II if the Soviets didn't undercut it.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Right.

WALLACH: Is that now over?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: That is over.

WALLACH: That is over. So we have, in a sense, abandoned the moral high position, have we not?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We have decided, the President has decided that we will continue to follow a policy of thoughtful restraint. But rather than have that restraint be a derivative of a treaty that is increasingly obsolete in its concept, has been violated by the Soviet Union, has never been ratified by the United States Senate, and would have expired if it had been ratified, we will be guided by our observations of what the Soviet Union does.

WALLACH: My point is there's nothing that the Soviets can do today or in the next six months that would breathe new life into the SALT II agreement itself. Is that correct?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I think what we're looking for is a regime of restraint. That's the real point. And more than that, real progress in the reduction of these nuclear arsenals.

WALLACH: Let me follow that up.

I was in Moscow last week and I asked a Soviet deputy foreign minister what he wanted out of the summit if a summit takes place. Number one on his list was strengthening the regimes of existing agreements. And he mentioned both SALT II and ABM.

We have now, I guess, abandoned SALT I and SALT II. Is there any reason why the Soviets shouldn't think we're also going

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to abandon the ABM treaty?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We have repeatedly stated our intent to observe the ABM treaty terms and we've called upon the Soviet Union to do so. They are in violation of that treaty by virtue of the building of the Krasnoyarsk radar.

WALLACH: Well, would we begin talks with the Soviets on strengthening the regimes of, as they put it, existing agreements?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We have been trying to engage them in just that in Geneva, particularly as regards the ABM treaty; and to say to them here was this ABM treaty negotiated back in 1972, let us create the conditions envisaged in that treaty, which do not include the Krasnoyarsk radar.

KALB: Mr. Secretary, it's time for a break.

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KALB: Mr. Secretary, before we go on to a couple of other questions, the Middle East, Central America perhaps, I want to stick with the U.S.-Soviet relationship.

It is not clear to me, on the basis of your answer to John Wallach, whether the United States, in your view, at this time, as best you can forecast, intends to continue to abide by the ABM treaty next year when it comes up for review.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We certainly intend to abide by the treaty. That's what we've said continuously.

KALB: Okay. Do you feel that it is in the interest of this country, then, to publicly pledge that the U.S. will abide by the treaty for another 15 to 20 years, as it seems to be at the heart of a new Soviet proposal in Geneva?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: The ABM treaty is a document and it has certain terms in it, and that's what we're pledged to observe.

Now, as I said a minute ago, the fact that the Soviet Union is building a large phased-array radar pointed inward, in direct contravention of the treaty, constitutes a problem. And I think we have to face that problem.

KALB: You've said in the past, when the terms of the SALT II treaty were not going to be undercut by the Administration, that the Soviet Union was violating the terms of SALT II. Now the President comes in with the decision saying we won't be bound by the terms any longer.

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If you are saying that the Russians are violating in a critical way the ABM, why don't you simply come out and say that the United States won't be bound by the ABM?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We think it's important to keep calling attention to these violations and to keep working to curb them and to try to keep as much of this treaty structure in place as is appropriate to the circumstances.

Now, in Geneva, in the space defense group that Max Kampelman is our negotiator, we have been consistently trying to engage the Soviets in a discussion of the ABM treaty regime and to try to get it back where it ought to be. And that's one step that we want to take.

KALB: Haven't they come in now with a proposal, and can you give us your response to it?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: As far as I'm concerned, I don't have any comment on the reports of any proposal.

TALBOTT: But there has been some ambiguity on the American side, Mr. Secretary, over what we here in the United States mean by the ABM treaty. Robert McFarlane, the former National Security Adviser, created quite a flap and made quite a bit of news on this program, Meet the Press, last year when he promulgated what is called the permissive interpretation of the ABM treaty, under which the United States would be allowed to proceed with more or less an unfettered Strategic Defense Initiative. You've played an important part in working out a kind of Solomonic compromise within the Administration on that.

Could you clarify, as of today, what Administration policy is? When we say we're going to stay with the ABM treaty, does that mean as restrictively interpreted?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I spoke on that subject authoritatively, in the sense that what I said was carefully worked out and approved by the President. And there hasn't been any change in the President's view.

It is the case that when you study the treaty itself and all of the background material, and so on, which has been done carefully, including by my legal adviser, Judge Abe Safir, that you can make out a very good case that a much broader interpretation than has been adopted by the Strategic Defense Initiative Office,and announced, could be made.

But we have a policy, and that is our policy.

WALLACH: Mr. Secretary, I don't think there is any

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disagreement, even among doves, about Krasnoyarsk and the fact that the Soviets have built a radar that is country-wide, faces inward, and is designed to knock down incoming American missiles. You are saying, in effect, today, are you not, that unless they do something about that, the duration of the ABM treaty itself will come into question within not too distant a future? Is that correct?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, I don't want to step into that hole. I think what we need to do is continue to work to have that treaty be fully observed in all of its elements. And that's what we're doing, not only in the group where violations are discussed, but in the direct negotiations in Geneva, where we're talking not only about that, but about their ballistic missile defense system about Moscow and some of its characteristics that are giving pause.

WALLACH: Well, in those very Geneva negotiations, the Soviets have reportedly said they want to strengthen the ABM treaty, and in return they might cut some of their strategic forces. Now, the ABM treaty permits some research, development and testing of a strategic defense or Star Wars system. Isn't that a hopeful sign?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: A hopeful sign will be when it is possible for the United States and the Soviet Union to negotiate carefully, officially and privately about some of these difficult things. And to the extent that can happen in Geneva, that will be a big plus.

KALB: Mr. Secretary, let me shift subjects now. The Middle East.

Are you planning to go to the Middle East this month?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I'm practically always ready to go to the Middle East if there's something worthwhile that has at least some chance of being accomplished. I don't say that I have to go out with a cold deck. And I'm willing to fail, but -- and try. But if there's something to try at, we're always ready to go. But it's a question.

Judge Abe Safir has been out there for the last two weeks trying to see if he can't put together something on Taba, and it hasn't been possible to do it. And he's pretty good.

KALB: And if it hasn't been possible to do Taba, does that mean that you are wiping out the possibility of going to the Middle East this month?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I work on that problem of the Middle

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East practicall continuously. And I don't intend to let up on work on that, because if there's something constructive, if you can just move the ball along an inch, why, I think it's worthwhile.

King Hussein will be here a week from tomorrow. We'll have a chance to meet with him. And we're continuously appraising the situation.

TALBOTT: People in our line of work, journalists, have been having a bit of a dust-up in the last few weeks with people in your line of work -- that is, officials charged with keeping the secrets of the United States Government. I know this has been a concern to you. You have fired at least one member of the State Department for leaking.

The Director of Central Intelligence and others have talked about sending journalists to jail if they publish information which the Administration considers to be classified. What's your own view on the use of legal sanctions and the threat of jail against publications and journalists in this ongoing struggle?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I'm not going to pose here as a lawyer. But I think the law, whatever the law is, ought to be enforced, including when somebody in the United States Government puts out information that is classified and sensitive. That person is violating the oath of office that you solemnly take, and should be fired, at a minimum. And anytime I can get my hands on people who do this, let me tell you, if I have anything to do with it, they're going to be fired.

Excuse me, Mr. Talbott. I interrupted you. What did you say?

TALBOTT: What about the journalist and the publisher who received the information and published it?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: As I say, I don't want to pose as a lawyer, to know what the legal situation is. But if they violate a law, a legitimate, constitutional, proper law, they ought to be prosecuted. If they haven't, they shouldn't.

KALB: And at this particular point, Mr. Secretary, what does it look like to you?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, I think they can be properly talked to, and journalists are talked to regularly. And I think there is a tradition of responsibility in the journalistic community and it still exists, and it should be encouraged.

Nobody wants to undermine national security. Nobody

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does.

KALB: On that note, sir, our time is up.

Thanks very much for being our guest. We hope to have you back real soon.

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